



Navigating Prevention Science The Essentials

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Prevention Science

The Essentials

Presentation description:

- Prevention is the process of creating population-level change to improve overall health through **decreasing risks, building on local strengths, and addressing norms and perceptions.**

Goal:

- Explore the science of creating change around substance abuse issues and describe essentials at work in communities.

Ready, set, go!

- In a couple of hours, let's see how many elements of prevention we can connect and explore.
- Terms
- Research
- Theories
- Strategies
- Principles

Prevention is population-level change

- Focus is on the community population to increase health and reduce risk factors overall.
- Forces us to look at an assortment of factors, across related systems which influence substance use.
- Implies implementing the foundation of the public health approach to creating solutions.

Population-level change IS Public Health

- Focus on promoting healthy living and preventing problems
- As population versus individually based
- Examines *factors* that influence risk and protection
- Involves multiple contexts, including cultural
- Consider the developmental stages of life
- Utilizes an intentional, dynamic planning process
- Is ongoing

Prevention Foundations

Risk factors and Protective factors

- Individual
- Peer
- Family
- School
- Community
- Society

Prevention Foundations

Risk factors:

Characteristic at the

Biological

Psychological

Family

Community or

Cultural level

that *precedes* and is *associated* with a
higher likelihood of problem outcomes.

Risk Factor activity

- Individually, list 3 things that could put a middle school student at risk for experimenting with marijuana.
- Go around the table and each share one item from your list and briefly say why you believe it to be a risk.

Prevention Foundations

Protective factors:

Characteristic at the

Individual

Family

Community or

Cultural level

that is *associated* with a **lower** likelihood of
problem outcomes.

Protective Factor activity

- Individually, list 3 things that could be a protection or deterrence for a middle school student to experiment with marijuana.
- Go around the table and each share one item from your list and briefly say why you believe it to be a protection.

Prevention Foundations

Risk factors and Protective factors

- substance abuse
- delinquency
- Violence
- unwanted teen pregnancy
- depression and anxiety
- school dropout
 - [WA Risk Factors list](#)

Risk factors for youth marijuana use

Prevention programs targeting significant early developmental stage risk factors have the potential to reduce use & frequent use of marijuana

- Poor family management
- Parental attitudes favorable to drug use
- Academic failure

Many peer and individual risk/protective factors are important, but some are more changeable than others

- Perceived risks of drug use
- Favorable attitudes towards drug use

In the community domain, focus on significant risk/protective factors

- Perceived availability of drugs
- Laws and norms favorable to drug use (for younger age group – 6th & 8th grades)

Source: Washington State Department of Social & Health Services • Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, L. Becker, 2013

Protective Factors

(community, family, school, peer)

Individual characteristics

- Resilient temperament
- Positive social orientation

Bonding

- Opportunities
- Skills
- Recognition

Healthy beliefs and clear standards

SDS in action

Risk and Protective Factors

- Research based [Middle school youth risk factors](#)
- Predictive
- Cumulative
- Changeable – not fixed

These correlations underscore the importance of

- Early intervention
- Interventions that target multiple, not single, factors

The ideal is a balance of risk and protective factors in a community.

Strategic Prevention Framework

- 5-stage planning process to guide
 - the selection
 - implementation
 - evaluation of effective, culturally appropriate, and sustainable prevention activities.
- The effectiveness of this process begins with a clear understanding of community needs and depends on the involvement of community members in all stages of the planning process.

Strategic Prevention Framework



Assets and Local Strengths

- Data
- Description of the community demographics
- Description of the issues and needs
- Catalog of local resources, gifts, talents, local strengths, stories, and assets
- Gaps

Community Capacity

- Increasing Resources
 - Human
 - Organizational
 - Fiscal
- Improving Readiness to **accept** that a youth marijuana use problems needs to change and to take **action** to change the problem.
- The importance of engaging stakeholders, formal and informal leaders.

Identifying Readiness of the Community for Change

Is the community...

- Unaware or have no knowledge of the problem?
 - Is there tolerance for the problem?
 - Is it just a select few of us who know?
- In denial that there is a violence problem in the community?
- Verbalizing concern to “do something?”
- Involved in planning strategies, activities and prioritizing?
 - Are groups and resources dedicated to the problem?
- Collecting and sharing data?
- Conducting evaluation of program outcomes?
- Involved in awareness activities, trainings, town halls, other community prevention activities?

Resources and Stages of Readiness

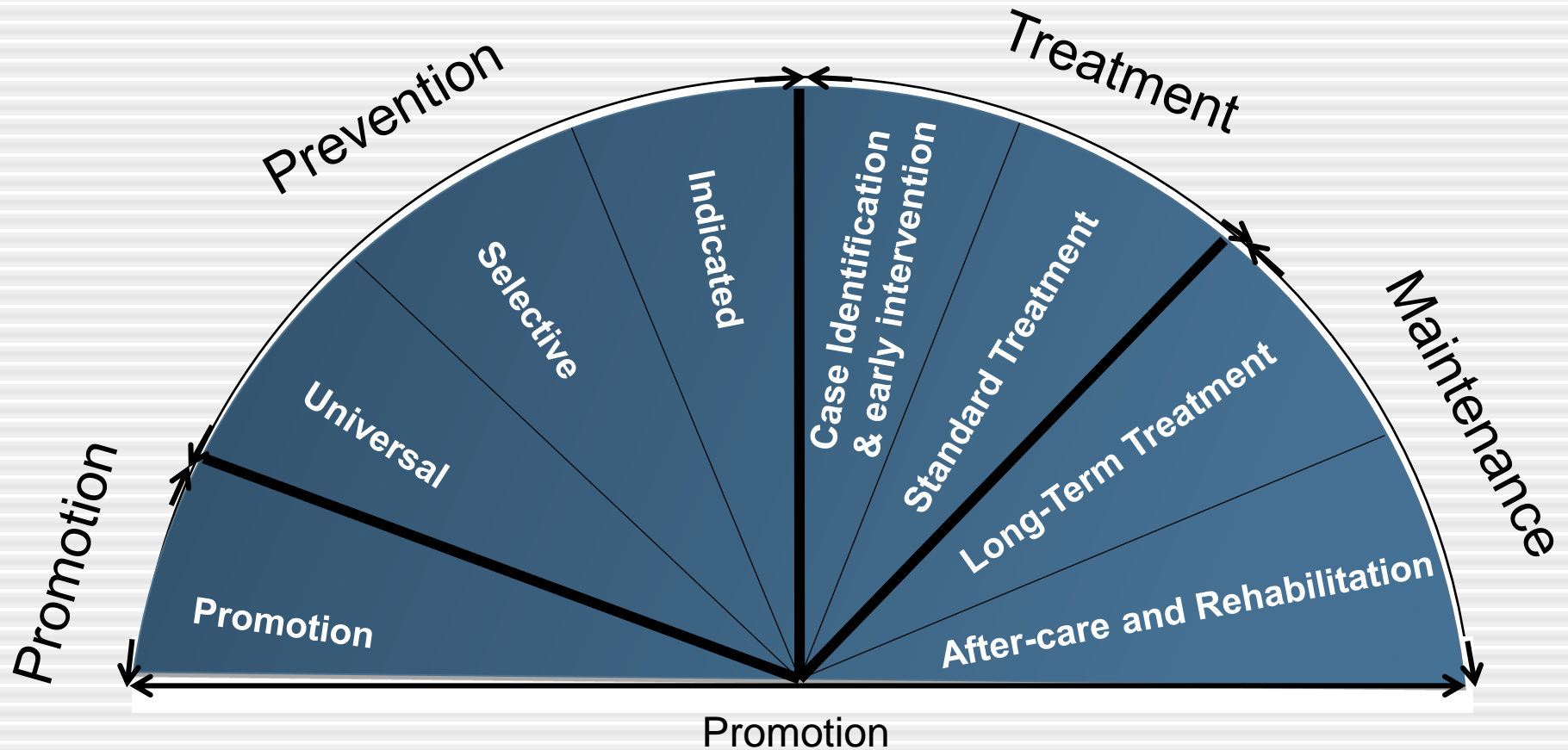
- High resources, high readiness
- High resource, low readiness
- Low resources, high readiness
- Low resources, low readiness

Assess and identify your foundational starting point for encouraging change.

Planning for implementation and change

- Increase community awareness
- Expand partnerships
- Introduce the strategies to stakeholders
- Provide training
- Identify levels of **importance** of each risk and protective factor
- Assess the **changeability** of each
- Plan for a realistic timeline

Continuum of Care



Universal Preventive Interventions

- Broadest approach
- Focus on general public or a whole population
- Schools, whole communities, workplaces

Examples:

Laws that increase penalties for providing marijuana to minors

Prevention programs for all middle school students in a school district

Selective Preventive Interventions

- Populations whose risk of developing disorders are significantly higher than average
- Focus on biological, psychological or social risk factors that are more prominent among higher risk groups than among the wider population

Examples: prevention education for new immigrant families living with young children in a poverty situation

Children of a parent with a substance use disorder

Indicated Preventive Interventions

- High-risk individuals who are identified as having beginning signs of developing a unhealthy behavior or disorder
- Focus on immediate risk and protective factors present in the environments surrounding the individuals.

Examples:

Referral for youth smoking an e-cig

Program for 21-25 year olds arrested for driving while under the influence of marijuana

Norms and Perceptions

- The role of perceptions in prevention
 - Influence action and inaction
 - Inflate and minimize the scope of the problem
 - Provide narrative data
 - Offer explanation of why this is our local problem right here and what needs to shift
- Norms as practices, patterns, and standards of social behavior
- Norms can be codified into laws & ordinances

Framework for Community Change

The process by which coalitions contribute to population-level decreases in targeted substance abuse problems utilizing an evidence-based model

What are community coalitions?

Community coalitions are comprised of parents, teachers, law enforcement, businesses, religious leaders, health providers and other community activists who are mobilizing at the local level to make their communities safer, healthier and drug-free.

Community problem-solving

How do coalitions make a difference in communities?

Coalition building is a smart strategy that promotes coordination and collaboration and makes efficient use of limited community resources.

By connecting multiple sectors of the community in a comprehensive approach, community coalitions are achieving real outcomes.

Twelve Sectors of the Community

- youth
- parents
- business community
- media
- schools
- youth-serving organizations
- law enforcement agencies
- religious or fraternal organizations
- civic and volunteer groups
- healthcare professionals
- state and local and/or tribal government agencies with expertise in the field of substance abuse
- other organizations involved in reducing substance abuse



Coalitions Pursuing Comprehensive Strategies

1. Provide information

2. Build skills

3. Provide social support

4. Reduce barriers / enhance access

5. Change consequences / incentives

6. Alter the physical design of the environment

7. Change policy and rules

**Individually-
focused**

**Environmentally-
focused**

Environmental Prevention Strategies

- Seek to create change in the shared environment in which individual children grow and learn
- Are efficient - they affect every member of the target environment
- Produce rapid results

Environmental Prevention Strategies continued

- Enhance other prevention efforts in the community
- Change the culture and contexts within which decisions about youth issues and substance use are made

and thus

- Reduce the prevalence of related negative consequences

Prevention Principles

- Address risk and protective factors
- Emphasize cultural strengths and adaptations
- Focus on program delivery for successful implementation
- Retain core elements
- Train staff
- Use clear and consistent messages and norms

Resources: [NIDA](#) and [CSAP](#) and [ONDGP](#)

Prevention Principles continued

- Build bonding
- Be sensitive to age appropriate interventions
- Implement at multiple settings
- Consider norms and perceptions
- Plan comprehensively and long term
- Incorporate evaluation measures
- Work collaboratively

Resources: [NIDA](#) and [CSAP](#) and [ONDCCP](#)

Prevention Resources

- WASAVP
- PSCBW
- WA Association of Prevention Coalitions
- Liz Wilhelm
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- Prevention Works In Seattle, Seattle Children's Hospital, King County YMPEP, Seattle Central College